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ABSTRACT

Asserting that prevention and intervention efforts to reduce bullying can serve to reduce later criminal behavior and save lives, this report identifies programs that have reduced bullying by as much as half and cut future arrests in half, and urges schools to invest in these programs. Chapter 1 of the report defines bullying and presents information on the incidence of bullying, noting about 30 percent of children are either bullies, victims of bullies, or both. Chapter 2 details the consequences of bullying--including depression, suicide, crime, and violence-- and argues that bullying is an early warning sign of criminal behavior. Chapter 3 describes one anti-bullying and two anti-aggression programs that strive to put youth onto a trajectory toward success in school, strong social ties, and productive lives and that have provided evidence of success from well-designed evaluations--the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers, and The Incredible Years program. Other promising programs are described, including the Aggressors, Victims, and Bystanders program and Operation Respect. This chapter also offers tips for developing new programs, including the active involvement of the principal and the adequate supervision of children and youth, especially in locations where most bullying incidents occur. The use of ineffective strategies is discouraged, such as peer mediation, zero tolerance policies, or advising victims to "stand up to bullies." Chapter 4 claims that the proven programs are relatively inexpensive to implement, given their results. The report concludes by urging schools to implement effective anti-bullying and anti-violence programs to prevent bullying and future violence. (Contains 56 endnotes.) (KB)

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# Bullying Prevention *Is* Crime Prevention

A report by FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS

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## Executive Summary

# Bullying Prevention *Is* Crime Prevention

Of children in sixth through tenth grade, more than 3.2 million–nearly one in six–are victims of bullying each year, while 3.7 million bully other children.

Preventing kids from becoming bullies and intervening to get bullies back on track can not only protect children from the pain that bullying inflicts immediately, but can protect all of us from crime later on. Fortunately, programs have been developed that can cut bullying by as much as 50 percent. They just need to be implemented in America's schools.

How miserable does bullying make its victims? Compared to their peers, kids who are bullied are five times more likely to be depressed. Bullied boys are four times more likely to be suicidal; bullied girls are eight times more likely to be suicidal.

### A Cause of Crime – and a Crime Prevention Opportunity

Nearly 60 percent of boys who researchers classified as bullies in grades six through nine were convicted of at least one crime by the age of 24. Even more dramatic, 40 percent of them had three or more convictions by age 24.

Bullying is an early warning that bullies may be headed toward more serious antisocial behavior. Moreover, victims of repeated bullying can explode in ways that threaten not just the bullies but many others as well. For example, a Secret Service study of school shootings found that "almost three-quarters of the attackers felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked or injured by others prior to the incident."

### Proven Programs Can Cut Bullying in Half— and Sharply Reduce Crime

Research clearly shows that half or more of all bullying can be prevented. The youngsters with the most serious behavior problems benefit most from effective programs. But bullying prevention efforts should be based on rigorous scientific research. Creating an untested program and calling it "bullying prevention" doesn't mean it will work. Thus far, three models that have been rigorously tested have been proven highly effective:

**The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program**—First developed in Norway after a number of bullying victims committed suicide, the program has now been implemented in several hundred

schools in the United States and around the world. It produced a 50 percent reduction in bullying and other antisocial behavior in Norway and a 20 percent reduction in a South Carolina test.

**Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (LIFT)**—LIFT shows long-term results are possible from a ten-week anti-aggression program. Compared to LIFT participants, fifth graders whose schools did not receive the program were by eighth grade 59 percent more likely to drink alcohol regularly, and two times more likely to have been arrested during middle school than those who received the program.

**The Incredible Years**—Originally designed for children ages two to eight with high levels of aggressive behavior, this program trains parents and children in problem-solving and other non-aggressive social skills. It has been able to stop the cycle of aggression for approximately two-thirds of the families receiving help.

## Money Well Spent

Bullying prevention programs are relatively inexpensive for the results they deliver. The upfront training and supply cost for delivering both the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program and LIFT programs throughout a school district are only a few thousand dollars. Part-time personnel costs for setting up and administering the program can often be covered by existing funding streams that pay for Safe and Drug Free Schools coordinators. Modest additional funds will typically be needed to implement LIFT and The Incredible Years.

These investments will more than pay for themselves by reducing special education costs and future crime. For example, special education classes for 12 years for one child with emotional problems can cost $100,000 more than regular schooling. Professor Mark A. Cohen of Vanderbilt University estimated that each high-risk juvenile prevented from adopting a life of crime could save the country $1.7 million.

Bullying is not just sad, it's dangerous. Too many bullies and their victims will go on to commit crimes, including murder. Others will kill themselves.

Every school should be doing what works to prevent bullying. When relatively little investment is necessary to cut bullying by as much as half, it's penny-wise and pound-foolish not to invest in these proven crime prevention programs.

**"...fifth graders whose schools did not receive the program were by eighth grade 59 percent more likely to drink alcohol regularly, and two times more likely to have been arrested during middle school than those who received the program."**

## Introduction

# A Call for Action From Law Enforcement

"It started out with people calling me names, and then it got worse. They threw things at me, they vandalized my house, and they sang nasty songs about me in school hallways and classrooms. It got so bad that I felt like I was in danger physically."

The young woman who spoke those words, Erika Harold, survived bullying and became Miss America 2003. But her experience in ninth grade left an indelible mark, and Erika has became a powerful spokesperson on the need for bullying prevention programs in schools across America.

Erika is a survivor, but that's not the case for all victims or bullies. The two suicidal teens who killed 12 schoolmates and a teacher at Columbine High School had been bullied. Among my fellow members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS is Beth Nimmo, whose daughter Rachel Scott was killed at Columbine, as well as many other crime victims whose lives might have been saved by effective bullying prevention programs.

In the aftermath of Columbine and other school shootings, America can no longer view bullying as simply one of the rites of passage kids must endure. If any doubt remained, this report shows that bullying spawns loneliness, depression and suicidal tendencies among its victims and crime and violence by perpetrators. Still, little has been done to put in place proven prevention programs in America's schools.

This report identifies programs that have cut bullying by as much as half and cut future arrests in half. Those are not just wise investments in school safety, they are wise investments in the public's safety.

When violence occurs, law enforcement must respond appropriately. Yet, it's far wiser to invest in prevention efforts before anyone gets hurt. That's why FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS' 2,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors and victims of violence call on local, state and national policy makers to invest in proven anti-bullying measures for every school in America.

Such investments will help potential bullies and their victims live better lives, and make all Americans safer from crime and violence.

R. Gil Kerlikowske
Chief of Police, Seattle
Chairman, FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS

## Chapter One

# What Is Bullying and How Common Is It?

Bullying can have terrible consequences for both the victims and the bullies, and can greatly impact many others in schools and communities across America. That is especially unfortunate because research shows there are effective and relatively inexpensive ways to reduce bullying. Before discussing the consequences of bullying and what can be done to stop it, it is helpful to first determine what is bullying, what is not bullying, and how many young people in America are either victims or perpetrators of bullying.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is not a physical fight between two young people of roughly equal strength who are angry with each other and have not yet learned to settle their differences without violence. Bullying is also not the friendly back-and-forth teasing that sometimes takes place between friends.

According to an article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA), there is a growing consensus that bullying has three components:[1]

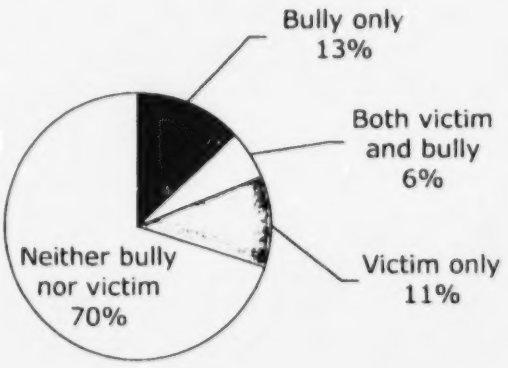
- Bullying is aggressive behavior or intentional "harm doing" by one person or a group.
- It is carried out repeatedly and over time.[2]
- It is targeted towards someone less powerful.

Bullying behavior can be verbal, such as insulting someone or making threats; psychological, such as spreading rumors or shunning the individual; or physical, such as knocking down or hitting the person.[3]

## How Common is Bullying?

In 1998, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)

**3 out of 10 Kids Are Either Bullies, Victims of Bullies, Or Both**




National Institute of Child Health and Human Development survey of 15,686 students

concluded a nationally representative survey on bullying of 15,686 students in grades six through ten.[4] The survey showed that 3.2 million youths were victims of bullying nationwide, and 3.7 million were bullies. The youths were counted as moderate to frequent bullies if they participated in bullying "sometimes" to "several times a week." Both the above figures include 1.2 million youths who both bullied others and were themselves victims of bullying. This means 30 percent of young people nationwide at the time of the survey were involved in moderate to frequent bullying, either as perpetrators, victims, or both.[5]

**"The survey showed that 3.2 million youths were victims of bullying nationwide, and 3.7 million were bullies"**

There were no significant differences in the frequency of being bullied between youths from urban, suburban, and rural areas.[6] Suburban youths were slightly less likely to bully, and rural youths were slightly more likely to bully, than the national average.

When it came to gender, girls were less likely than boys to be either bullies or victims but still experienced high rates of either bullying or being bullied. The study found that 26 percent of boys were moderate to frequent bullies while 14 percent of girls were moderate to frequent bullies. Twenty-one percent of boys were moderate to frequent victims of bullies while 14 percent of girls were victims that often. Girls tended to be bullied more often by being repeatedly belittled about their looks, through sexual comments or with rumors. They also were hit, slapped, or pushed, although not as frequently as boys.[7]

The NICHD study results were similar to studies from other countries and other studies done in the United States. For example a study of 1,001 young people in the fifth through twelfth grades done for the Family Work Institute found that 12 percent of the youths interviewed had been bullied five times or more in the prior month.[8] Another survey by the Justice Department showed that eight percent of 12 to 18 year-old students report being bullied in the last six months. While that is less than the NICHD percentage, the Justice Department survey showed that the number of victims is increasing, not decreasing.[9]

## Chapter Two

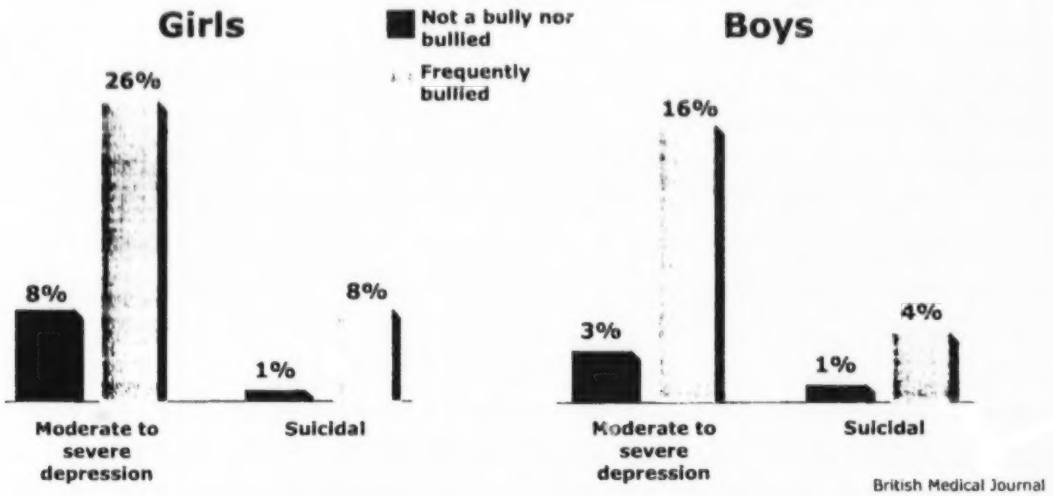
# Bullying Begets Depression, Suicide, Crime and Violence

Bullying occurs all across America and in other countries as well. Many adults have distinct memories from their childhood of occasions where they either intimidated other children or were bullied themselves. Often these memories are dismissed with the expression, "kids sure can be cruel!" Only recently has chronic and serious bullying begun to be scientifically linked to more serious problems such as a greater likelihood to commit crimes later in life and higher suicides.

### Consequences for the Victims

The NICHD study of bullies and victims found that there were over three million victims of bullying in America (2.0 million who are victims only, and 1.2 million other youths who are both victims and bullies).[10] In a survey commissioned by the Kaiser Family Foundation, more eight to 15 year olds picked teasing and bullying as "big problems" than those who picked drugs or alcohol, racism, AIDS, or pressure to have sex. More African Americans saw bullying as a big problem for people their age than those who identified racism as a big problem.[11] Though they almost never forget their tormentors, many children who are bullied can quickly move beyond the bullying once it subsides.

**Frequently Bullied Kids More Depressed, Suicidal**




British Medical Journal

For many victims of bullying, however, the impact can be very serious:

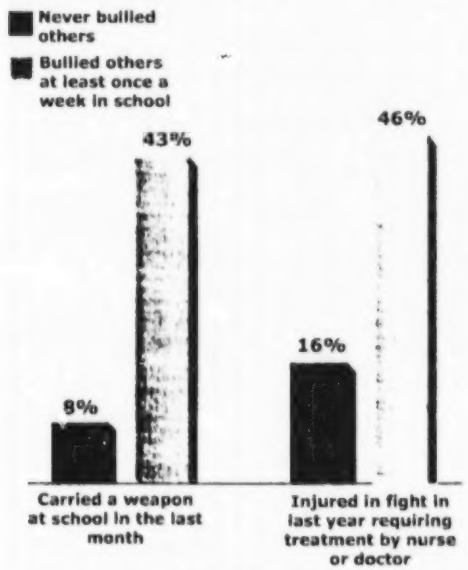
- In a study done in Australia, six percent of boys and nine percent of girls reported staying home to avoid being bullied.[12]

- In a review by British researchers of ten studies of bullying, every one of the studies reported higher levels of depression among young people who were victimized by their peers.[13]

- In a study done in Finland, boys who were frequently bullied were over five times more likely to be moderately to severely depressed, and four times more likely to be suicidal than those who were not being bullied, while frequently bullied girls were over three times more likely to be moderately to severely depressed, and eight times more likely to be suicidal.[14]

Unfortunately, the negative effects of bullying do not disappear with time. An article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) reported that "individuals formerly bullied were found to have higher levels of depression and poorer self-esteem at the age of 23, despite the fact that, as adults, they were no more harassed or socially isolated than comparison adults."[15]

**Bullies More Likely to Carry Weapons to School and be Injured**


Never bullied others
Bullied others at least once a week in school
8%
43%
16%
46%
Carried a weapon at school in the last month
Injured in fight in last year requiring treatment by nurse or doctor

Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine

No figures are available on the total number of actual suicides resulting from bullying, either when people are young and enduring the bullying or later because of the residual effects of earlier bullying. With over three million moderate-to-frequent bullying victims in America, however, it is certain that this is a life-or-death issue for many people.

## Bullying: an Early Warning Sign of Criminal Behavior

Without intervention, bullies pose a serious risk to fellow students and others. The NICHD survey indicates, for example, that compared to the students in grades six through ten who reported they were not involved in bullying, the most serious bullies (those who both bullied others at least once a week and continued with their bullying away from school) were seven times more likely to report they had carried a weapon to school in the prior month. The more serious bullies were also three and a half times more likely to have been in a fight where they sustained an injury serious enough to require treatment by a nurse or doctor.[16]

Specific studies of bullying also show that bullies' anti-social behavior is not limited to school, but continues in other settings and into adulthood. Approximately 60 percent of boys who were classified by researchers as bullies in grades six through nine were convicted of at least one crime by the age of 24, compared to only 23 percent of the boys who were not characterized as bullies or victims. Even more dramatic, 40 percent of the boys who were bullies – compared to 10% of those who were neither victims nor bullies — had three or more convictions by age 24.[17]

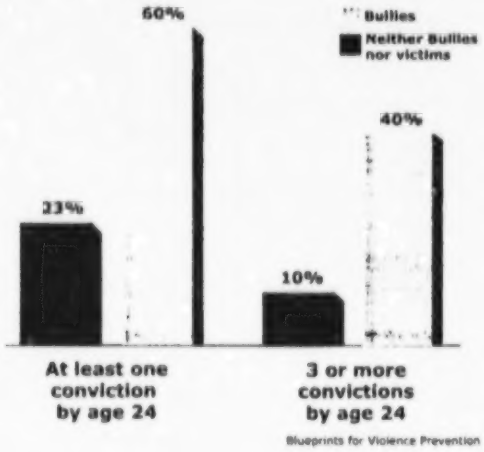
## Those Who are Both Victims and Bullies May be More At-Risk...and More Dangerous

The NICHD bullying survey found that over six percent of students, or 1.2 million young people, reported that they were both victims and perpetrators of bullying. The researchers found that those who were both bullies and victims often were caught in the worst of both worlds. They suffered from many of the problem behaviors that bullies exhibited, such as higher rates of smoking and lower academic achievement, but unlike other bullies, these youngsters also experienced problems similar to those of the young people who were victims only, such as trouble developing friendships and loneliness. This led the researchers to conclude that "youth who both bully others and are bullied may represent an especially high-risk group."[18]

Not only are these youths at greater personal risk from problem behaviors, but their angry responses to being bullied also puts other people at risk. For example, experts from the Secret Service were called in to help develop profiles of the Columbine and other school shooters. They found that most of the shooters had been bullied before choosing to attack their perceived tormentors. The Secret Service experts reported:

> Almost three-quarters of the attackers felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked or injured by others prior to the incident... Bullying was not a factor in every case, and clearly not every child who is bullied in school will pose a risk for targeted violence in school. Nevertheless, in a number of the incidents of targeted school violence studied, attackers described being bullied in terms that suggested that these experiences approached torment. These attackers told of behaviors that, if they occurred in the workplace, likely would meet legal definitions of harassment and/or assault...In some of these cases the experience of being bullied seemed to have a significant impact on the attacker and appeared to have been a factor in his decision to mount an attack at the school. In one case, most of the attacker's schoolmates described the attacker as 'the kid everyone teased'. In witness statements from that incident, schoolmates alleged that nearly every child in the school had at some point thrown the attacker against a locker, tripped him in the hall, held his head under water in the pool or thrown things at him. Several schoolmates had noted that the attacker seemed more annoyed by, and less tolerant of, the teasing than usual in the days preceding the attack.[19]

**Boys Who Bully Are More Likely To Commit Crimes**




Obviously, most victims of bullying don't respond with murder, and having been bullied by no stretch of the imagination relieves a killer of responsibility for such a crime. But punishment after the fact will always be too little and too late to undo the agony such violence leaves behind. Only prevention comes in time to keep innocent people from becoming victims.

## Chapter Three

# Bullying Can Be Prevented

Bullying has been with us forever. That may lead some people to conclude there is nothing that can be done to prevent it. While eliminating all bullying may be unrealistic, research shows that as much as half of all bullying can be prevented,[20] and that the young people with the most severe aggressive behaviors can benefit the most from efforts to reduce bullying and aggression.[21]

## Proven Programs

Anti-bullying programs (and the broader anti-aggression programs that are discussed below which also prevent bullying) strive to put more young people onto a trajectory that sends them in the direction of success in school, strong social ties, and productive lives. This is a trajectory that also lifts them above failure, violence, and ultimately prison.

No one should assume this is easy, and overly simplistic programs are unlikely to be effective. Serious science should be continually employed to design, test, and replicate new and existing anti-bullying programs so they can have the greatest impact on protecting young people and the larger community. However, one anti-bullying and two anti-aggression programs have already proven they can produce results.

**The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program** – The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program was first developed in Norway, following the suicide of three 10-14 year old boys who had been bullied.[22] It has now been implemented in several hundred schools in the United States and around the world, including an evaluation that included 39 schools in six school districts in South Carolina.[23]

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program begins with a school survey to determine how common bullying is, so parents, teachers, and especially principals and administrators can begin to assess the extent of bullying. Next training is held before the school year starts with the school principal, the anti-bullying coordinator for that area or school district, other school personnel (including non-teaching staff), and selected students and parents. This further raises awareness and begins the education process on what works to prevent bullying. Regular school rules against bullying are established, class meetings on bullying are held, and teachers are encouraged to establish positive consequences for those who help prevent bullying and negative consequences for those who engage in bullying. Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways and other specific areas where bullying is likely to take place is implemented and adults are also urged not just to be present, but "to intervene quickly and decidedly in bullying situations." Parents are included in the school-wide

effort. Finally, individual interventions are initiated with individual bullies and victims. The talks with bullies often include their parents and reinforce the message that bullying will not be allowed. The victims are typically reluctant to get adults involved, so in the meetings with victims and their parents the key message is that there are adults at the school who "are both willing and able to give [the victim] any needed help." The goal of the program is to ensure that the whole school, and not just a few teachers, will come together and act to make sure students know that "bullying is not accepted in our class/school, and we will see to it that it comes to an end."[24]

In Norway, this program achieved a 50 percent reduction in the number of incidents of bullying and reductions in antisocial behavior such as vandalism, fighting, theft, alcohol use, and truancy. The classrooms that most faithfully followed the program saw even larger reductions in bullying. After the program was evaluated in 39 schools in South Carolina, self-reported bullying was reduced there by 20 percent while bullying was increasing in the schools without anti-bullying programs. There were also statistically significant differences in school misbehavior, vandalism, and general delinquency between the students enrolled in the anti-bullying program and students who did not receive the anti-bullying program.[25]

**"...people with the most severe aggressive behaviors can benefit the most from efforts to reduce bullying and aggression."**

The Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, a research center based at the University of Colorado, reviewed the consistently positive results for the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program in South Carolina and Norway, as well as positive results from other replications in England and Germany. It concluded that the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program qualified as a model program for inclusion in the Center's well-respected Blueprints for Violence Prevention series.[26] The federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) has also designated the Bullying Prevention Program as a model program because it has been shown to reduce alcohol use and other risky behaviors.[27]

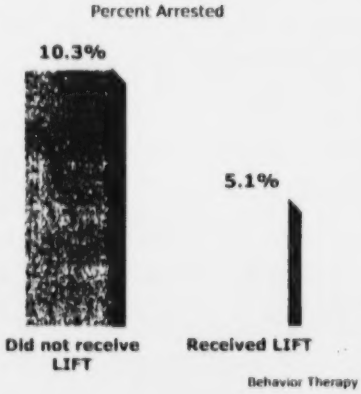
**Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (LIFT)** – LIFT is an anti-aggression program that research shows produces long-term results from a ten-week intervention. Even though it is not specifically a school-based anti-bullying program, because it is so effective in reducing aggression it is no doubt reducing bullying as well. LIFT is not yet as widely replicated as the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, but it has already been evaluated with both first and fifth-grade students. LIFT intervenes on three levels. Instructors offer classroom-based training in social and problem-solving skills to students. LIFT instructors also offer six training session to all parents so they can reinforce these skills at home. The newly learned skills are then tested on the playground where adult monitors reward individuals and groups when they practice positive behaviors, and reduce children's privileges when they fail to control aggressive behaviors. The goal is to instill social coping strategies in the students and to create an environment that surrounds each child with parents, teachers and peers who are working together to help prevent aggression and bullying. The playground becomes the practice field for these new techniques and the children come to prize their good behavior armbands. Because they can earn rewards as a group, this helps create a positive group atmosphere that discourages bullying rather than one that ignores or

openly encourages bullying. [28]

The research results are very encouraging. Aggressive playground behavior was more than a third higher in schools that did not receive the LIFT program compared to schools that were randomly assigned to receive the LIFT program.[29] The researchers also reported, "the most aggressive children improved the most."[30] The results were just as impressive three years after the intervention. First graders who did not receive the intervention were shown in fourth grade to have dramatically higher levels of inattentive, impulsive and hyperactive behaviors than LIFT participants,[31] which is important because children with these behavior problems are at higher risk of becoming violent criminals.[32]

The fifth graders who did not receive the program were 59 percent more likely by eighth grade to have established a pattern of drinking alcohol, and were twice as likely to have been arrested during middle school as those who received the LIFT program.[33]

**Youths receiving LIFT in the 5th grade were half as likely to be arrested by 8th grade**




**The Incredible Years** – It may seem premature to say some pre-school or first grade children are serious bullies or are suffering from an excess of aggression. However, University of Washington professor Carolyn Webster-Stratton notes that various studies show seven to 20 percent of preschool and early school-age children have levels of disruptive, aggressive behaviors severe enough to qualify for a mental health diagnosis.[34] This is not about a child grabbing a toy from another child. These are children who are throwing chairs and injuring others in kindergarten. Data show that approximately 60 percent of these children will later manifest high levels of antisocial and delinquent behavior.[35]

Fortunately, as criminologists and other researchers agree, when children are first learning aggression is the best time to teach them to control their aggression.[36]

The Incredible Years program was originally designed for children aged two to eight with high levels of aggressive behavior, including but not limited to bullying. The program recognizes that to reach the children, you also have to reach their parents, so it trains parents and children in problem-solving skills and non-aggressive social skills so children can learn to get along with others and make friends. Webster-Stratton reports that this program has "been able to stop the cycle of aggression for approximately two-thirds" of the targeted families receiving help.[37]

The Incredible Years has also been tested as a broader anti-aggression intervention for all young children in over 40 preschool and early elementary school programs, including some Head Start classrooms. In this broader classroom version of the program, The Incredible Years serves all children in a classroom instead of providing counseling for only the troubled children and their parents. In this approach, The Incredible Years counselors train parents, teachers, and family service workers who then work to improve the behavior of every child. An evaluation conducted in a Head Start setting found that one year after the program ended, 80 percent of the children in the program were within an acceptable range for problem behaviors (fewer than nine problem behaviors in 30

minutes) while only 48 percent of the children not in the program were within that acceptable range.[38] Because of such consistently positive results, The Incredible Years Program was also selected by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence as one of its "Blueprint" programs.

## Other Interesting Programs

Many anti-violence and anti-bullying programs are emerging across America. Some of these efforts may not have as great an impact on preventing bullying behavior as the proven programs cited above. However, there are no doubt good programs being developed that lack only the expensive and time consuming studies necessary to document their effectiveness. Other programs are being evaluated but the results are not yet available. Over time a number of excellent new approaches will certainly emerge from the serious efforts now underway that will further refine the anti-bullying field.

Two programs of particular interest, while not yet having multiple well-designed evaluations with very strong results that would meet tough standards for "proven programs," are certainly worth more attention because they have positive initial evaluations and are beginning to be widely implemented across America. They deserve the investments needed to complete additional rigorous evaluations that will show how well they work as they are currently being delivered.

**The Aggressors, Victims, and Bystanders** program has been chosen by the Department of Education as a Promising Program for its Safe and Drug Free Schools program.[39] An evaluation of the program found that it significantly reduced bystander support for aggression through either passive acceptance (e.g. letting a fight start without doing anything to stop it) or active encouragement (e.g. encouraging other kids to fight).[40] This program, typically delivered in 12 classroom sessions, puts a special emphasis on the role of bystanders in preventing school violence or bullying.

There is anecdotal evidence from this program that the emphasis on bystanders is valuable. At Tahlequah Middle School, in Tahlequah OK, where the program had been implemented, within a few hours after a new student showed up at school with a knife, bystanders had placed four notes in the school's warning box to alert school officials to this danger. After one program session at Lake Worth Middle School, in Lake Worth FL, two students came forward to report to the police officer who delivered that session that another student said he was planning to bring a weapon to school to attack two teachers.[41]

Police officers and sheriffs are increasingly delivering the Aggressors, Victims and Bystanders program. One of the developers of the program, Dr. Ron Slaby, who is Senior Scientist at the Education Development Center and a lecturer at Harvard, was initially unsure about having law enforcement officers deliver the program, but Slaby has become convinced that the officers can be effective. With the leadership of Palm Beach County School District Police Chief, James Kelly, a new center in Palm Beach Florida has been set up that will help train officers, deputies and others in this approach. Because of the wide potential for using officers and sheriffs to deliver this program, a well-designed evaluation that tests this program's effectiveness when delivered by sheriffs and police officers would be very useful.

**Operation Respect** was founded by Peter Yarrow, of the music group Peter, Paul, and Mary. Former Maryland Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend has recently joined the effort as president. A preliminary survey showed that a high percentage of teachers/counselors reported lessened

bullying (92 percent), name calling (86 percent), and hostility, hitting and angry explosions (85 percent) in their classrooms as a result of the anti-bullying program. The survey also indicated this program may be especially effective with elementary school children.[42] Operation Respect has already provided workshops for 20,000 educators.[43]

Many states have begun to develop their own support for anti-bullying programs as well, and some states are beginning to take the important step of mandating anti-bullying programs for schools in their states. Meanwhile, many education professionals are continuing to develop their own curriculum and seminars.[44]

## Advice from the Justice Department

For schools testing new programs, the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office in the Department of Justice offers some advice in its report, *Bullying in Schools*, by Rana Sampson. The report makes a number of suggestions, including:

- The school principal should be actively involved in the anti-bullying efforts. Without the principal's support the program is likely to have only limited impact.

- A "whole school" approach such as the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program should be used. Such an approach enlists the entire school in a number of ways and therefore is more likely to be effective than programs that address bullying from only one or two directions.

- An effort to encourage reporting of bullying should be part of any "whole-school" approach. For example, a "bully box" in the school will allow children and youths to anonymously alert teachers to any bullying problems or possible attacks on the school.

- Clear, anti-bullying rules need to be established and publicized.

- Adequate supervision of young people is essential. This is especially necessary on playgrounds and in hallways where most incidents of bullying take place. Often the problem is that adult supervisors do not intervene routinely to prevent bullying and teach positive social skills. In other cases, enough supervisors are not available to adequately protect children from bullying. If that is the case, that also needs to be addressed.

- These efforts should be maintained over time. This cannot be a one-time effort. Some aspects of the program should be repeated once a year, while others, such as closer supervision of hallways and playgrounds, should continue throughout the school year.[45]

## What Doesn't Work

The COPS report also advised against relying on some strategies such as:

**Peer mediation approaches.** As Sue Limber of Clemson University warns "bullying involves harassment by powerful children of children with less power."[46] Therefore, Limber argues, mediation approaches might even further victimize bullied children by assuming they have the power, without adult intervention, to prevent the bullying.

**Zero tolerance policies.** The report says that the zero tolerance approach "may result in a high level of suspensions without full comprehension of how behavior needs to and can be changed. It does not solve the problem of the bully, who typically spends more unsupervised time in the home or community if suspended or expelled."

**Simply advising victims to "stand up to bullies."** This can be unproductive or even dangerous without adequate adult support to prevent bullying in the schools.[47]

## Chapter Four

# Money Well Spent

The proven programs are relatively inexpensive, especially considering the results they deliver. Often, much of the cost of setting up of the programs and the training of students can largely be covered by existing funding streams that already pay for the salaries of coordinators, counselors, and teachers for whom this work becomes part of their jobs.[48]

There are a number of reasons why these programs are typically relatively inexpensive:

**The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program's** one-time training and supply costs total only a few thousand dollars in upfront costs. For example, the cost of training the trainer who can then administer the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program over many years in a large school district or county is approximately $4,000 dollars.[49] Personnel costs for administering the program can typically be covered by funding for the Safe and Drug Free Schools program. There are Safe and Drug Free Schools coordinators in virtually every school district or county in America who can be drawn on to set up and administer the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. These personnel are already fully funded and the program is already one of the scientifically proven approaches approved for these coordinators to use in keeping schools safe and drug free. Once they are fully trained, they can implement the program in many schools for relatively little additional cost over the years.

**"much of the cost of setting up of the programs and the training of students can largely be covered by existing funding streams"**

**LIFT's** supply and training costs are modest, and school psychologists serving school districts can be trained to supervise the ten-week long program. However, in many cases, given the existing shortage of counselors in most school districts, additional money will be needed to provide part-time counselors or parent and child trainers to deliver the program. LIFT also suggests that additional part-time staff will typically be needed temporarily to assist with the careful monitoring and rewarding of children's behaviors on the playground. Still, the on-going costs per child can be fairly minor for LIFT, especially in large school districts, if one psychologist working on LIFT part-time can provide the training to implement the program in many schools.[50] Some school districts have the available staff and other

resources necessary to fully implement this program now, and they should proceed. However, most school districts will probably need additional support in order to adopt the LIFT program in their schools.

**The Incredible Years** program, when applied as group treatment for children diagnosed with aggression problems, can be more expensive than LIFT or the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. In addition to the one-time training and supply costs, there are the ongoing expenses for regular training sessions provided for the parents (roughly $1,000 for 12 sessions) and for the children (roughly $2,000 for 20 sessions).[51] Compared to most mental health interventions, though, those costs are relatively inexpensive because the program relies on videos and group sessions rather than one-on-one counseling. For low-income families, often Medicaid can cover these expenses.

When The Incredible Years program is applied in a school setting for all the children in that school whether or not they have aggression problems (such as in a Head Start program, other preschool program, or an elementary school), additional funding sources probably will be necessary. In such a setting the program provides twelve sessions of group training for parents and twelve sessions of group training for teachers. The teachers do not have to be trained every year, but finding regular funding for the parent teaching components of the program will be a challenge. This may necessitate additional funding at the local, state, or federal level.

These proven programs are relatively inexpensive but it is important that they be fully implemented as they were designed. This typically requires additional funds for technical assistance and monitoring to insure that the implementation is done well, with the quality and intensity required to achieve expected results.

**"Each high-risk juvenile prevented from adopting a life of crime could save the country between $1.7 million and $2.3 million."**

While the cost of the proven programs is relatively modest, some school administrators may be tempted to fund even less expensive anti-bullying programs that are not as comprehensive. Many of these "bargain" anti-bullying programs do not deliver the same results, and that can be costly. The costs of not adequately addressing problems at the right time can be very high:

- Paying for a child with emotional problems to be in a special education classroom for twelve years can cost $100,000 over and above the regular cost of educating that one child.[52]

- A 1998 study by Professor Mark A. Cohen of Vanderbilt University estimated that each high-risk juvenile prevented from adopting a life of crime could save the country between $1.7 million and $2.3 million.[53]

When proven anti-bullying programs can so effectively reduce expensive problems such as these, it is clear they will easily pay for themselves many times over.

## Conclusion

# Failure to Act Now Guarantees More Bullying and Violence

When children are repeatedly victimized, and little is done to stop it, that is not only sad, but also dangerous. Too many of these children will go on to kill themselves. Some will turn their guns on other students. When bullies are allowed to progress through school without their intimidating and violent behavior being addressed, they often become a danger not only to the school, but also to the whole community. Without intervention, too many of these chronic bullies will begin carrying weapons, and too many will grow up to be chronic criminals.

**"The science shows that bullying programs work, and are not only affordable but also likely save money."**

There is now scientific proof that much can be done to prevent bullying and to help both the victims and the bullies. The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program shows that bullying can be cut by as much as half,[54] while the LIFT program demonstrates that children reached by an effective anti-aggression effort will commit half as many crimes in middle school.[55] This is a clear sign that these young people are on their way to committing fewer crimes throughout their lives.[56]

Such results merit adequate funding to implement these proven programs in every school. The good news is that relatively little investment is needed to accomplish these goals, and the programs will pay for themselves through reduced school violence, fewer placements for special-education, fewer suicides, and less future crime. In many cases money for those efforts is already available from existing funding streams. Where it is not, relatively modest new funding will suffice, but that needs to be secured through local, state, and national efforts. There is no excuse for not acting now.

The science shows that bullying programs work, and are not only affordable but also likely save money. Inaction now guarantees that more students and ordinary citizens will become victims of bullying and violence. It is time to ensure that every school in America has an effective anti-bullying program.

## Endnotes

[1] Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 285*(16), 2094-2100. See also: Olweus, D., & Limber, S. (1999). *Bullying prevention program.* In D. S. Elliott (Series Ed.). *Blueprints for violence prevention: Book nine.* Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.

[2] This component of the definition is not meant to condone even single acts of intimidation or violence. It is used for the purpose of identifying youths who would more typically be seen as either bullies or victims by their peers, as opposed to individuals who may have "once or twice" participated in bullying or been bullied.

[3] Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 285*(16), 2094-2100. See also: Olweus, D., & Limber, S. (1999). *Bullying prevention program.* In D. S. Elliott (Series Ed.). *Blueprints for violence prevention: Book nine.* Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.

[4] Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 285*(16), 2094-2100.

[5] Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 285*(16), 2094-2100. Students were classified as moderate to severe victims of bullying if they acknowledged that they were victims of bullying "sometimes" or "several times a week" or as moderate to severe bullies if they acknowledged that they were perpetrators of bullying "sometimes" or "several times a week."

[6] Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 285*(16), 2094-2100.

[7] Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 285*(16), 2094-2100. The percentages on bullies and victims include those who were both bullies and victims.

[8] Galinsky, E., & Salmond, K. (2002). *Youth and violence: Students speak out for a more civil society.* New York: Families and Work Institute.

[9] Devoe, J.F., Ruddy, S.A., Miller, A.K., Planty, M., Peter, K., Kaufman, P., Snyder, T.D., Duhart, D.T., & Rand, M.R., (2002, November). *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2002.* U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, and U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs

[10] Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 285*(16), 2094-2100.

[11] Kaiser Family Foundation, & Children Now. (2001). *Talking with kids about tough issues: A national survey of parents and kids.* Retrieved from http://www.kff.org/content/2001/3105/toplines.pdf. For a summary of this survey, see: http://www.kff.org/content/2001/3105/summary.pdf

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[13] Hawker, D. S. J., & Boulton, M. J. (2000). Twenty years' research on peer victimization and psychological maladjustment: A meta-analysis review of cross-sectional studies. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 41*(4), 441-445.

[14] Kaltiala-Heino, R., Rimpela, M., Marttunen, M., Rimpela, A., & Rantanen, P. (1999). *Bullying, depression, and suicidal ideation in Finnish adolescents: School survey.* Retrieved from the British Medical Journal Web site: http://bmj.com/cgi/reprint/319/7206/348.pdf. The study measured those who suffered from "severe suicidal ideation."

[15] Olweus, D. (1994). Bullying at school: Long-term outcomes for victims and an effective school-based intervention program. In L. R. Huesmann (Ed.), *Aggressive behavior: Current perspectives* (pp. 97-130). New York: Plenum Press. Cited in Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 285*(16), 2094-2100.

[16] Nansel, T.R., Overpeck, M.D., Haynie, D.L., Ruan W.J., & Scheidt, P.C. (2003, April). Relationships between bullying and violence among US youth. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine,* 157, 348-353.

[17] Olweus, D., Limber, S., & Mihalic, S. (1999). *Bullying prevention program.* In D. S. Elliott (Series Ed.).

*Blueprints for violence prevention: Book nine*. Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence. Studies of generally aggressive behavior (as opposed to studies specifically of bullying behavior) also show similar results. While many aggressive children do not become violent adults, too many do. Criminologist David Hawkins and his colleagues reviewed studies showing the link between early and later aggression and concluded that "these studies show a consistent relationship between aggressiveness in males measured from age six and later violent behavior." One study of ten and thirteen-year-olds showed that two-thirds of the boys with high teacher-rated aggression scores had criminal records for violent offenses by age 26. For the former, see: Hawkins, J. D., Herrenkohl, T., Farrington, D. P., Brewer, D., Catalano, R. F., & Harachi, T. W. (1999). A review of predictors of youth violence. In R. Loeber, & D. P. Farrington (Eds.), *Serious and violent juvenile offenders: Risk factors and successful interventions* (pp. 106-146). London: Sage Publications. For the latter, see: Stattin, H., & Magnusson, D. (1989). The role of early aggressive behavior in the frequency, seriousness, and types of later crime. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 57*, 710-718. Cited in Hawkins, J. D., Herrenkohl, T., Farrington, D. P., Brewer, D., Catalano, R. F., & Harachi, T. W. (1999). A review of predictors of youth violence. In R. Loeber, & D. P. Farrington (Eds.), *Serious and violent juvenile offenders: Risk factors and successful interventions* (pp. 106-146). London: Sage Publications.

[18] Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 285*(16), 2094-2100.

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[21] Stoolmiller, M., Eddy, J. M., & Reid, J. B. (2000). Detecting and describing preventive intervention effects in a universal school-based randomized trial targeting delinquent and violent behavior. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 68*(2), 1-11. The Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (LIFT) program successfully reduced the number of aggressive acts by children who were highly aggressive on the playground.

[22] Olweus, D., Limber, S., & Mihalic, S. (1999). *Bullying prevention program*. In D. S. Elliott (Series Ed.). *Blueprints for violence prevention: Book nine*. Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.

[23] Limber, S. (2003, August). *Youth development program: Olweus bullying prevention*. Retrieved from the Clemson University Web site: http://www.clemson.edu/scg/youth/IFNLbully.htm; Olweus, D., Limber, S., & Mihalic, S. (1999). *Bullying prevention program*. In D. S. Elliott (Series Ed.). *Blueprints for violence prevention: Book nine*. Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.

[24] Olweus, D., Limber, S., & Mihalic, S. (1999). *Bullying prevention program*. In D. S. Elliott (Series Ed.). *Blueprints for violence prevention: Book nine*. Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.

[25] S. Limber, personal communication, August 13, 2003. See also: Olweus, D., Limber, S., & Mihalic, S. (1999). *Bullying prevention program*. In D. S. Elliott (Series Ed.). *Blueprints for violence prevention: Book nine*. Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence. These interventions took place before the Columbine and other school tragedies. As a result of the findings that bullying contributed to the Columbine and many other school shootings, schools currently using this approach may find even greater success in reducing bullying now that teachers, parents, administrators, and students are likely more concerned about bullying.

[26] Olweus, D., Limber, S., & Mihalic, S. (1999). *Bullying prevention program*. In D. S. Elliott (Series Ed.). *Blueprints for violence prevention: Book nine*. Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.

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[30] Stoolmiller, M., Eddy, J. M., & Reid, J. B. (2000). Detecting and describing preventive intervention effects in a universal school-based randomized trial targeting delinquent and violent behavior. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 68*(2), 1-11.

[31] Eddy, J. M., Reid, J. B., & Fetrow, R. A. (2000). An

elementary school-based prevention targeting modifiable antecedents of youth delinquency and violence: Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (LIFT). *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 8*(3), 165-176. The effect size for the difference in results was 1.5. Effect sizes are used as a statistical way to compare results across studies, and an effect size of 1.5 is "considered 'very large' for a psychological intervention."

[32] This is a difficult issue for many parents and schools because children are often misdiagnosed with attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders (ADHD) today. Children with a diagnosis of ADHD, and even children with less clinically significant problems such as restlessness, are not in any way guaranteed to be more violent later in life, but there is consistent research showing that a greater proportion of children with those problems will become violent criminals than children without such difficulties. For more information, see: Hawkins, J. D., Herrenkohl, T., Farrington, D. P., Brewer, D., Catalano, R. F., & Harachi, T. W. (1999). A review of predictors of youth violence. In R. Loeber, & D. P. Farrington (Eds.), *Serious and violent juvenile offenders: Risk factors and successful interventions* (pp. 106-146). London: Sage Publications.

[33] Eddy, M. J., Reid, J.B., Stoolmiller M., & Fetrow, R.A. (In Press). Outcomes during middle school for an elementary school-based preventive intervention for conduct problems: follow-up results from a randomized trial. Behavior Therapy.

[34] Webster-Stratton, C., Mihalic, S., Fagan, A., Arnold, D., Taylor, T., & Tingley, C. (2001). *The Incredible Years: Parent Teacher and Child Training Series*. In D. S. Elliott (Series Ed.). *Blueprints for violence prevention: Book eleven*. Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.

[35] Campbell, S. B., Shaw, D. S., & Gilliom, M. (2000). Early externalizing behavior problems: Toddlers and preschoolers at risk for later maladjustment. *Development and Psychopathology, 12*(3), 467-488.

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[37] Webster-Stratton, C., Mihalic, S., Fagan, A., Arnold, D., Taylor, T., & Tingley, C. (2001). *The Incredible Years: Parent Teacher and Child Training Series*. In D. S. Elliott (Series Ed.). *Blueprints for violence prevention: Book eleven*. Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.

[38] Webster-Stratton, C., Reid, M. J., Hammond, M. (2001). Preventing conduct problems, promoting social competence: A parent and teacher training partnership in Head Start. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 30*(3), 283-302.

[39] U. S. Department of Education, Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Expert Panel. (2002). *Exemplary and promising safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools programs, 2001*. Jessup, MD: Author.

[40] Slaby, R. G., Wilson-Brewer, R., & DeVos, E. (1994). *Aggressors, victims, & bystanders: An assessment-based middle school violence prevention curriculum*. Newton, MA: Education Development Center. See also: U. S. Department of Education, Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Expert Panel. (2002). *Exemplary and promising safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools programs, 2001*. Jessup, MD: Author.

[41] R. Slaby, personal communication, August 1, 2003. Evaluation:
Slaby, R. G., Wilson-Brewer, R., & DeVos, E. (1994). *Aggressors, victims, & bystanders: An assessment-based middle school violence prevention curriculum*. Newton, MA: Education Development Center.

[42] While this is a preliminary survey, of the teachers/counselors who voluntarily responded, 92 percent reported lower bullying, 86% reported lowered name-calling, and 85% reported less hostility, hitting and angry explosions in their classrooms. Interestingly, 65% of elementary school students reported lessened ridicule, while only 30% of middle-school students saw such a positive change. For these and other results, see: Metis Associates, Inc. (2002). *Don't laugh at me school program survey results: School year 2001-2002, summary report*. New York: Author.

[43] Operation Respect. (2003, July). *Operation respect: Don't laugh at me*. Retrieved from http://www.operationrespect.org/

[44] M. Snyder, personal communication, July, 30, 2003. Marlene Snyder, Ph.D., who is a trainer at Clemson University for The Bullying Prevention Program, confirmed that many anti-bullying programs are being developed for use in American schools. For example, see: Noll, K., & Carter, J. (2003, July). *Taking the bullies by the horn: Bullying, school violence, self-esteem. Retrieved from* http://hometown.aol.com/kthynoll

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http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/e12011405.pdf

[47] Sampson, R. (2002). *Bullying in schools.* Retrieved from the U. S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services Web site: http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/e12011405.pdf

[48] None of the three programs described above is able to provide exact per child costs because the costs vary greatly depending on the setting, the size of the schools being served, whether new people must be hired or not, etc. The following discussion explains generally what expenses must be covered and how most of those expenses may typically be covered by existing funding. These general conclusions are based on a personal conversation, 7-3-03, with Marlene Snyder, Ph.D., who is a trainer with the Clemson University based Bullying Prevention Program; Eddy, M. J., Reid, J.B., Fetrow, R.A., Lathrop, M., & Dickey, C. (in press). The Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (LIFT) prevention program for youth antisocial behavior: description, outcomes, and feasibility in the community. In *Outcomes for children and youth with emotional and behavioral disabilities and their families: Program and evaluation best practices (second edition)*; and a conversation with Lisa St. George who is Administrative Director of the Incredible Years.

[49] M. Snyder, personal communication, July, 30, 2003.

[50] Eddy, M. J., Reid, J.B., Fetrow, R.A., Lathrop, M., & Dickey, C. (in press). The Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (LIFT) prevention program for youth antisocial behavior: description, outcomes, and feasibility in the community. In *Outcomes for children and youth with emotional and behavioral disabilities and their families: Program and evaluation best practices (second edition).*

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